



Unatego Alumni Association

Letter from the President

By Keith Bachman

Thank you all for your support and interest in our association. We welcome all attendees/graduates of Unadilla, Otego and Unatego Central School Districts. We are an all-schools, all-classes, all-inclusive group proud of its history and heritage.

First, I want to introduce myself as the new president of the association, then talk about our growth and plans. I was elected by the board at its June meeting and assumed duties July 1. I am a 1968 graduate of Unatego Central School and grew up in Unadilla. I have a heartfelt interest in serving the association and, reflective of that, I am working with the board of directors on a 10-point action plan for the future.

As we move forward, you will see more information and most likely a few gentle pleas for your help along the way. I am honored and pleased to be your president and to work with the remarkably skilled and dedicated people who serve on the board of directors.

In the past year, we have seen growth in alumni membership; student scholarships have increased thanks to the support and generosity of the Unadilla Central School Alumni Association, in which I hold membership; and we have received new offers from two alumni to serve on the board.

In January, two distinguished former Unatego students, Dr. Peter Prendergast and author Karen (Moore) Barbour, were inducted into the Unatego Central School District Hall of Distinction, a program we support, but with a selection committee separate from the board.

New candidates are needed and the deadline for 2020 induction is the end of February 2019. You will all receive an HOD application as an attachment to the email for this newsletter.

The All-Class Reunion was a big success this year. Increased attendance and interest in the association, as well as the celebrations of individual class reunions (1983, 1988), helped make this the best reunion weekend thus far.

The future is bright for the Unatego Alumni Association and, with confidence and commitment to growth, I welcome support for alumni, students, school and community. I hope you will join us at one of the events in the coming months and that you might consider new or renewed membership and ways to support the association.

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.” – Lao Tsu (ancient Chinese sage)

Class of '83 Reunion, July 22



Save the Date:

**July 19 – 4th Annual All-Class
Reunion
Details TBA**

Unatego Alumni Association Membership News:

The Unatego Alumni Association Board is working to grow the association in two related ways.

First, we are reaching out to all alumni to encourage them to support the association by becoming dues-paying members. Second, we are asking alumni to consider further aligning themselves with the association and its mission through service on standing committees.

Officials are seeking eligible candidates for the following committees:

Finance Committee
Membership Committee Alumni Programs
Committee Awards/Scholarships Committee
Newsletter Committee
Archives Committee

If you believe you have the talent, energy and desire to step into a role of leadership within any of these committees, please consider exploring these options for serving the association.

We are also seeking class captains for every class. Find more information on page 3.

We welcome you to join us and help support the association's mission to serve Unatego students, alumni, school and community. It is true that the wealth of our heritage and legacy can be found within the hearts, minds and deeds of those dedicated to making a difference.

Thank you for your continuing support,

Your Association Board of Directors

HALL OF DISTINCTION NOMINEES

The Unatego Hall of Distinction Committee has selected two alumni for induction this year: World War II Army Air Corps veteran and Class of 1943 Otego High School graduate Charles Herring, Jr and Joseph Bard, a 1959 Otego graduate who recently retired from a distinguished career as educational leader.

The Unatego Hall of Distinction honors graduates of Unatego, or the previous districts of Unadilla Central and Otego Central, who have distinguished themselves during their lives. Selections were announced at the high school graduation ceremonies this June.

The ceremony honoring this year's members will take place on Friday, Jan. 25 at approximately 7:00 p.m. in the Unatego High School Gym, preceded by a meet-and-greet reception at 5:30 in the cafeteria.

Please mark your calendars and plan to honor the inductees and their families.

Charles White Herring, Jr.

Herring graduated from the Otego Central School in 1943 and soon after enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps, where he served with distinction as a gunner on a B-29 in the Pacific theater.

Following his discharge, Herring attended Cornell University and graduated in 1950 with a degree in agriculture and animal husbandry. He returned to Otego after college, where he owned and operated the Herring Lumber Company for the next 30 years.

Herring was also a prolific volunteer in the community, serving as a member of the Otego Volunteer Fire Department, Masonic Lodge and with the Unatego Board of Education.

Joseph F. Bard

Joseph Bard, a 1959 graduate of Otego Central, recently retired after 20 years as the executive director of the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools, capping a distinguished career of more than 50 years in public service.

Following his graduation from Hartwick College in 1963, Bard went on to teach at Unatego and in Connecticut and Kentucky. He served as a college administrator in Iowa and an investigator for the New York State Department of Human Rights, as well as in the U.S. Army.

Bard chaired the National Rural Education Advocacy Council for 10 years, served as a member of the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Board of Education and, for six years, was commissioner of basic education and deputy secretary for elementary and secondary education in the state of Pennsylvania.



Association Officers

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2018 Scholarship Winners

Two Unatego graduates, Zacharia Carey and Gavin Flavell, were named the Unatego Alumni Association's scholarship winners for 2018.

The graduates were awarded scholarships of \$500 each during June graduation ceremonies. This year's scholarship awards were increased from \$250 each, thanks to the generous support of association members and the Unadilla Central School Alumni Association.

Scholarships are awarded to a student attending a two-year college and another attending a four-year college.

Zacharia Carey is earning an associate's degree at Corning Community College and has a deep interest in the engineering field, with plans to pursue a career therein after graduation.

While at Unatego, Carey was a member of the National Honor Society for two years. He was held in high regard by his teachers and peers and known for his motivation and dedication to his studies.

Gavin Flavell is attending Clarkson University to earn a bachelor's degree in science. He is interested in chemistry and plans to pursue a career in that field.

While at Unatego, Flavell excelled in his studies and was a longtime Boy Scouts, earning the highest rank of Eagle Scout.

The association's scholarships program is central to its purpose and members of the UAA Board of Directors join all of the Unatego community in offering heartfelt congratulations to Carey and Flavell for their achievements, with sincere wishes for success.

All-Class Reunion News

The third annual All-Class Reunion was a great success this year.

Once again, it was held at the Long River Inn in Unadilla, where all enjoyed meeting friends new and old in the pleasant and fun atmosphere. More than 130 alumni and guests attended. Most were graduates of Unatego, but many graduates of the former Unadilla and Otego Central schools attended as well. Although the two school districts officially merged in 1963, everyone can be proud of our history.

School buildings and colors and mascots may change and the villages or towns of childhood may not look the same, but we will continue to form a community of people as alumni of Otego, Unadilla and Unatego Schools. We honor and celebrate history and legacy in all our endeavors and it is always the people who count the most. It was wonderful to see so many of us celebrating together.

A nice highlight of this year's All-Class Reunion weekend was the Class of 1983 and Class of 1988 reunions, both of which saw a great turnout.

Please remember to save the date of July 19 for the fourth annual All-Class Reunion. If your class is going to be celebrating a milestone reunion next year, please consider having your event on the Saturday/Sunday of the UAA All-Class Reunion Weekend.

Every class should have a "class captain" or "captains" to lead and represent her/his class and gather the details of their class' reunion activities. A class reunion committee, made up of a group of classmates, is advisable for reunion planning. A class captains handbook will be forthcoming, and guidance is available from the board's Alumni Programs Committee.

Please feel free to contact the board president at keith.e.bachman@gmail.com as well as any board officers/members. Also, contact unategoalumniassociation@gmail.com or find "Unatego Alumni Association" on Facebook. Hope to see everyone in July.

Don't forget: Find us on Facebook at



Unatego Alumni Association!

'Fine Old Building' Gets New Lease on Life: An Update on Otego Elementary

By Dr. David Richards, Unatego Superintendent

Following a yearlong process gathering community input, the district solicited proposals from potential developers for the closed former Otego Elementary building.

Ultimately, four proposals were received and after representatives from all four entities presented ideas to the Unatego Board of Education at a public meeting, the board chose AgZeit, an indoor organic agriculture business. The purchase price of the building was \$300,000.

In addition to large-scale organic agriculture, they also envision using the building to provide living space for recently separated military veterans, a training center for veterans and other adult learners, a rural health center focused on telemedicine and a year-round farmers' market. They also hope to retain the gymnasium/auditorium for community use and turn the cafeteria and kitchen into a restaurant for community members.

AgZeit CEO Jim Dutcher is very familiar with repurposing vacant school buildings, as his business began as a start-up operation in Endicott at the former Linneaus West Elementary School. With no additional space available in that building and having a need to expand operations, Dutcher turned to the Oneonta region, where he learned of the opportunity presented in Otego from the Otsego County Industrial Development Agency.

AgZeit anticipates using green energy to run its operations in Otego, and predicts they will soon be providing fresh, organic and healthy foods on a very large scale. Total initial private investment is expected to be nearly \$4 million, with a five-year investment topping \$55 million and providing employment for more than 100 once fully operational.

Although it is sad for many in the community to see the school closed, the consensus is that people are pleased to see the building given a new lease on life and appreciate the potential for additional jobs for area residents. Closing on the property is expected to occur near the end of November.



Unatego Alumni Association Membership Form

Name (include maiden name): _____

Mailing address: _____

Email address: _____

Telephone: _____

Year of Graduation: _____

Annual MEMBERSHIP Fee/person \$10.00 _____

Paid by Check _____ or Paid with Cash _____

Lifetime MEMBERSHIP Fee \$250.00 _____

Paid by Check _____ or Paid with Cash _____

Additional Donation for Scholarship Fund _____

Paid by Check _____ or Paid with Cash _____

Would you like to be contacted to join a committee or be a class captain?

YES _____ NO _____

*Mail this completed form and your check made payable to **Unatego Alumni Association***

To: Betsy Shultis, 7 Diane Drive, Otego, NY 13825